

CURB FOR SECTARIES AND BOLD PROPHECIERS:

By which

*Richard Farnham the Weaver, James Hunt the Farmer,
Mr. Greene the Feltmaker, and all other the like
bold Propheciars and Sect Leaders may be
bridled and kept within their
own beaten way,*

And the
*Sacred and weightie worke of the Ministry bee
reserved to men, whom education fits, God
calls, and good order in our Church
prefers thereunto.*

A matter very considerable in these present times.

Doe men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Math. 7. 16.

LONDON.
Printed, 1641.





To the zealous but misled followers
of Preachers in Corners.

SIRS,

THe English Proverb sayes, None is more bold then blind Baiard, and the comparison holds well, making Zeal joyned with ignorance like to mettles in a blind Horse, which renders him mischievous, rather then usefull.

The Pharisees said, they saw, but were indeed blind Leaders of the blinde, till both fell into the ditch; and God fired Ierusalem for their misled Zeal. Beware of following their like. As of old, so in these latter days, there are false Prophets; saith Saint Paul, Their methods and sleights are subtil to deceive you, their skill very shallow and meane to informe you. The wiseman hath his eyes in his head, and seeth this. And if you will not put your garment to a Botcher; nor trust your sick bodie to be cured by a Quack-salver, Will you submit your soules guidance to them, whom your itching eares, and self will, and blinde humour affects? A Prophet or sonne of a Prophet would have more to say: but the glasse following, if you have eyes to see, may give you a sight of your Leaders defects, and your own fancies.



*A Curb for Sectaries and bold
Propheciers.*



*S*aint Paul, a Master builder in Gods house, Every man is
having spoken of bringing men to ever-
lasting life by the Ministry of men, faith, not fit to take
upon him the
Ministry.
who is sufficient for these things? 2 Cor. 2.

16. The question, implies, that it is not
an easie matter to be fitted for this sacred work.

In many respects therefore a singular care is to be
taken, what persons be admitted to so great a charge:
and that, 1 Because they are either a savour of life to *Reas. 1*
life; or a savour of death to death to their hearers.
Their office must needs bee of much circumspection
and trust, seeing the issues of it are of so great con-
cernment.

2 The titles given them shew, as the excellencie, so *Reas. 2*
the weightinesse of their office, for they are called
Husbandmen in Gods field, Planters, and Waterers in
his Garden: Want of skill in managing this charge
may produce thornes, thistles, weeds. They are Gods
Shepherds, and have their flocks, as sheep apt to stray;
if they heedfully prevent it not; They are Stewards
of the heavenly mysteries, Teachers in Gods steed,
co-workers with God, Watchmē, Overseers of others,
Embassadors. They are the Lights of the World, and
God, when he gave Lights to the World, took a view

of them, to see that they were good : and seeing Deacons must first bee tryed, and then Minister, if they bee found faithfull; much-more must Workmen of higher place not have hands laid suddenly upon them, nor run before they be sent; nor take a calling upon them, unlesse a *Titus* or *Timothy*, put in place to that end, ordain them, and appoint them to the work.

Reas. 3.

3 The treasures which God intrusts them to communicate to others are comprised in the sacred Scriptures, and are of so great depth, and so large extent, and have points so many and so considerable that we must resume that of *St. Paul*, who is sufficient for these things : let us look into the particulars.

Of skill in the first Table requisite in the Clergie.

In the first place, the knowledg of God and his worship, and all the circumstances thereof, cannot soundly and truly be taught but by those whom Gods spirit enables thereunto, and pious education hath fitted for the worke.

In the Second Table.

2 The performances of man to man, of Kings, of subordinate Rulers, spirituall and temporall, in all degrees; the subjection required of al inferiours; all duties commanded concerning preservation of our persons, modest and chast behaviour, true dealings in possessions & outward goods, truth in our ordinary speech, and witnessing in cases of difference, the not desiring and coveting in heart, what is not ours. These all with their circumstances have so many cases of conscience belonging unto them, & to be discussed concerning them, that large volumes scarce serve so to unfold them but that other cases will still be emergent.

And in cases of conscience.

In Politicks.

So that, 1 policie and government of States and Kingdomes. 2 Christian carriage, conversation in Heaven

Heaven, and civill deportment of all private persons, in all callings and places, of all trades and professions for all things generally concerning them, and for many particulars, are not so left to naturall reason, and humane discretion, but that they may borrow their best rules from Scriptures. So that the government of a people, and whole Countrey, private mens own Religious behaviour, and pious ordering their families may be learned from the holy Scriptures lawes, and the practice of *Moses*, *David*, and sundry other Saints of God, who for their circumspect walking both in private and publique life be greatly renowned. 3 Seeing in the old Testament we have Gods laws amply described in *Moses*, and further opened and enlarged in the Prophets, and the New Testament afterwards, the equity and ground of many of those laws of God are of use for tryall of all kind of Lawes, whether naturall, civill, Canon, or common Law, which in severall Nations have their use. None of all these may bee repugnant to Gods Law, but subordinate thereunto with reference to the condition of severall Nations.

Ethicks.

Oeconomicks.

Skill in law of divers kinds is grounded on Gods Law.

3 The Old Testament comprehends in brieft the History of the World for almost 4000. yeeres; it declares the creation, and mans defection, the VVorlds drowning & reparation; how Gods Truth was propagated & the Church enlarged; what was the practice, & faith of Gods redeemed people; how many oppositions and malicious persecutions befell them by the *Edomites*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Philistines*, *Egyptians*, *Affyrians*, *Babylonians*, *Persians*, *Grecians*, and others, and how God plagued these Nations for their mischievousnesse and crueltie: The New Testament unfolds the

Skill in Historie requisite in the Clergie.

the History of Christ our Saviours life and death; the planting of the Christian Church, the doctrine of the holy Apostles after Christs Ascension. In these are many weighty points to be discussed, some varietie in circumstances to be reconciled, and the sweet harmony of both Testaments to be explained?

Skill in Chronologic.

4 How frequently is the account of times recorded in the old Testament, and sometime in the new? That wee might not confine it to the old, as a matter then onely considerable; The holy Ghost hath related the times of Gods mercies and judgments on the World, as a light and lustre to story, as a preserver of order, & confirmer of certaintie in Narration, and Man ought seriously to consider the same. For the Husbandman is not more observant of fit seasons, for his Countrey affaires, then God hath beene of due times in his dealings with men, and managing matters in the field of the World for mans good.

In Geography.

5 Who can well understand the dispersion of *Noahs* sonnes, and their children, and the speeches often running upon them, and the places of their habitation, and how they came to entermeddle with Gods people? Who can rightly distinguish of the Rivers, Mountains, and Cities mentioned in sacred Writ, if he be not acquainted with Geographie?

In the deep secrets of Prophecies.

In Gods Booke there are many prophecies, which declare deep and hidden secrets by expressions excellent and much surpassing the ordinary straine. Many of these are to be searched into and cleered, as by other plainer Scriptures, so by the Histories of the World, which before Christs time were of vast comprehension, and of far greater since, in regard of the Gospells enter-

entertainment, or abuse & rejection now in many more parts of the world. What knowledge, what study, and meditation is together with the assistance of Gods spirit required for the opening of these prophesies; which are rich and comfortable treasures left to GODS Church?

7 For the cleering and explaining many Scriptures it is requisite to have good skill in many naturall matters; not onely because the wisdom and power of the Creatour is seen to be wonderfull in the Creatures, but also because God often in Scripture speaks of the Eagle, Ravens, Stork; of Cedars, Vines, Algummims; of Dromedaries, Badgers, and Lions of divers kinds; of the Leviathan and the Tannin or Dracon of the Sea, and of many other matters in nature which are often made use of for mans information: and therefore tis expedient that these matters should be made known.

In the know-
ledge of na-
ture.

8 Seeing the old Testament is written for the most part in the *Hebrew* tongue, and some few passages in the *Chaldee*, it must necessarily be that there are some difficulties in our Translations, which cannot be perfectly looked into without the knowledge of these tongues. There are also some objections of men erroneous on both hands, which cannot possibly be solved without very good skill in these tongues. Rare *French* and *German* words cannot be well knowne, but of the skilfull *French* and *German*, nor rare *Hebrew* words but of the learned *Jews*; And seeing the *Hebrew* tongue is now no where purely spoken, nor extant unmixt, but in the Bible; some hard words in this tongue are to be knowne by the tongues most neere to the *Hebrew*, as the *Syriack* and *Arabick*: for a word seldome used in

In the *Hebrew*
and *Greek*
tongues, &c.

He-

Hebrew may be more frequent in them. And for the new Testament it is written in the *Greek* tongue, which is very copious and elegant, and hath many words of ambiguous use and signification. It hath also some *Latine* words as *Denarion* and *Tabérne*, and some *Hebrew* and *Syriack*, as *Corban*, *Maranatha*, and divers others: What study for skill herein is requisite? Besides in the New Testament be many forms of speech borrowed from the Old, many Hebraisimes, many short and deep speeches inexplicable without conference with some speciall clauses of the Old. And how often in many passages of both Testaments is mention made of the customes, manners, and conditions of severall Nations in the World, of their Gods and Idolatrous worship?

In Rhetorick.

9 How many lofty and brave strains of Eloquence, in *Esay* and the Prophets, in *Paul* & the *Revelation*, would seeme strange and be unknown? how many admirable and sublime carriages of speech and figures far beyond the best *Heathen* Oratours would be unobserved; did not the art of Rhethorike begun of old and perfected in these latter times, and applyed to sacred use, lend her helping hand?

In Logick.

10 How often should wee erre in the context of Scripture, what improbable deductions would thence be strained, how many sound proofes for necessary Doctrines and conclusions would be unobserved, had we not together with the spirit of GOD, which is the principall, the use of Logickall Rules, as a good accessory? Gods providence protects his servants, yet do they gird on their swords in their journeys, and the Spirit of God doth leade us into all sacred truth, yet
Art

Art is not to be refused to keep us from being surprized by spirituall thieves. But some object, The Apo- *Object.* stles, and so we, by the Spirit of God can doe more good then any by his Art. *Answer.* Speak to the *Jews,* *Answ.* *Indians, Spaniards,* and others among us, as the Apostles did to severall Nations, though not educated to their tongues, and we will much the rather credit your ability to teach us the truth (which you pretend Artists misse of) in our own tongue.

Besides, the question is not whether you by the spirit (which you presume to have) can by it alone doe more, then others by art alone, but whether more then others, who have the spirits assistance as well as you; and also education at some *Gamaliels* feet, as *Paul* had. Gods Spirit knew, how to make use of Art, when *Moses* brought up in the *Egyptian* learning was called to the Government of *Israel*, when *Aholiab* and *Bezaleel* were chosen for the work of the Tabernacle, when *Jubals* invention was taken into the furnishing of *Davids* Quire. Did yee know Art, or the right use of Art, yee would not dis-esteem it.

II How many passages in the ancient Fathers of the *In the ancient* Christian Church acquaint us with Gods goodnesse to *Fathers.* his servants, shew the Heresies reigning in their dayes, and their Arguments against the same? How often doe they open difficulties in Scripture, in which we, had they not gone before us, might have erred? Doe not they declare how far they were from Papisticall superstitions and errours on the one hand, and from fanatical fancies and groundlesse opinions on the other hand? *Object.* They had their infirmities and did in *Object.* some things erre. *Answer.* If yee have rob'd the *Answer.*

Pope of his Chaire, and have an unerring certainty, throw the first stone at them. Remember *Michatahs* accusers, and the horns which smote him. Goe not about to take the moat out of their eye, if yee have a beam in your own. Give the ancient Fathers their due, and know that there is good use of them.

In controver-
sies of divers
kinds.

12 How large is the field of Polemicall Divinitie and Controversie? How necessary is it to have the Arguments of Papists, Atheists, Turks, and severall Sectaries well answered? Why should misprisions in Historie, Prophecies, tongues, cases of conscience and the like, goe unconfuted to the great prejudice of Christian truth? Why should not the abuse of Logick and other Arts be called to account by such as have the true use thereof? Let then Polemicall skill and School Divinitie rightly managed have its due place and esteeme.

Of this large extent are matters to be studied by the Clergie, things Spirituall, Temporall, Eternall, treated on in Scripture, are within their taske. In regard whereof I propound these questions to any indifferent Reader.

1 Whether persons, educated in Manuary Trades, and spending their time therein, can possibly attaine to so different kinds of knowledge, and bee able to confirme truth and answer doubts: which professed Students (suppose but of equall parts) cannot attain without long continued education, direction, practice?

2 Seeing our Land by Gods blessing is better provided for with a learned, Religious, painfull Clergie, old and young, then ever heretofore, then any land in the World: are they well advised, who will be taught
by

by such as leap from the Shop-board to the Pulpit, rather then by them, whom education fits, and God and authority calls to the work ?

3 Whether Colleges and Schools now, as of old the Schools of the Prophets, be not of singular use to fit severall persons for the manifold knowledge required in the Clergie ?

4 Seeing one man cannot excell in all these kindes of knowledge, First, because mans life is short and Art long, Secondly, God hath made men of different capacities and abilities, whether some of the Clergie are not to be directed to one study, some to another, some fitted for higher, some for lower employments and places ? As in the Apostles times, all were disposed of according to their different gifts, *1 Corinth. 12.*

5 Whether a generall knowledge in all these kinds be not of good use in every Clergie man, that upon occasion of doubt or difficultie he may know to what book or man, having exact skill in that kind of knowledge, he may have recourse for resolution ?

6 Whether, because tis not fit any man should war upon his own cost, provision of meanes hath not beene well made, and may well be augmented (as times differ) for encouragement and maintenance of Students, and learned men in those severall kindes.

7 Seeing teachers of ordinary congregations are to apply themselves to their hearers capacity, and to have as milke for babes, so strong meate for more able Christians : whether good benefices have not beene well by our forefathers allotted them, and whether it be not pittie they should be diverted or impaired, And the Clergie put to suit for them ?

8 Whe-

8 Whether seeing exact skill in sacred Histories and matters of the Church, in severall tongues, in controversies, and the like, being somewhat removed from popular capacities and men of meaner parts, and yet most necessary to be by serious study attained, such as excell therein may not be well provided for, by some of the Dignities, Prebends, and other the like preferments in our Church?

9 Whether some men of singular naturall parts, and having got by education and practice a great measure of knowledge above mentioned, and being men very religious, conscionable, and grave, are not fitted by God for giving counsell and advice in the greatest matters among Gods people, as *Eliazer* did to *Iosua*, *Nathan* to *David*, *Jehojada* to *Joas*, *Jehosua* to *Zorobabel*?

10 Whether some Clergie men eminent for skil & government by gods blessing on their education, learning, and practice, as the Apostles were by Gods extraordinary guift, may not be thought fit to govern, direct, and inform others subordinate to them, and to order both Clergie men and their meanes for the good of the Church, as did the Apostles, and their successors after them.

I have done, and leave all to the wisely considerate. More might have beene said of the bounds of the Clergies skill, more questions annexed: But this little may informe such as will see, such as put out their own eyes what salve can cure? God help them; his good Spirit guide us all.

FINIS.



